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Automotive NEWS

DECEMBER 23, 1991

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Stempel's GM: 80,000 fewer jobs

As Big 3 cut 12 jobs, Japanese create one

PHIL FRAME
Staff Reporter

The dramatic cuts announced by General Motors last week are just the continuation of the reduction of the domestic auto industry as it reluctantly accepts becoming smaller — and possibly leaner and more Japanese-like.

And the jobs are not being replaced by Japanese automakers in North America.

GM plans by 1995 to eliminate about 80,000 North American jobs.

But already in 1991, the Big 3 shed more than 40,000 jobs — nearly three-quarters as many as the Japanese automakers' total jobs in North America.

Japanese makers, who picked up 1.9 percentage points of market share as their sales dropped less than those of domestic makers this year, added 3,165 jobs in manufacturing, development, sales and all other operations in the United States and Canada.

The ratio is more than 12-1: For every 12 Big 3 jobs lost to the economy, the Japanese added one.

The ratio would have been less severe in 1990, when Japanese transplants added more jobs at their transplants. No direct relationship exists between Big 3 job losses and Japanese gains. GM Chairman Robert Stempel pointedly did not blame the Japanese for his huge restructuring announced last Wednesday.

As the U.S. companies pare down their operations to improve profitability and account for market share lost to Japanese competition, there are now about 55,256 jobs in the United States and Canada in the Japanese automakers' vehicle assembly, development, sales, port operations and all other functions.

Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. have been cutting their white-collar ranks at a faster rate than GM in recent years.

Stempel announced that GM will shut down six more vehicle assembly plants in the next four years, in addition to four plants that already were slated for closing.

GM also will close four powertrain and 11 component plants before 1996.

In human terms, the cuts mean the elimination of 80,000 North American jobs before 1996. GM's total employment in 1995 is expected to be about 350,000, down by half from 1985, Stempel said.

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JOE WILSSENS/AUTOMOTIVE NEWS

Chairman Robert Stempel said the cuts are designed to make GM profitable with a market share in the mid-30s.

Behind the announcement

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late news

Porsche pricing: 968 below 944

RENO, Nev. — Porsche Cars North America has priced its new 968 coupe below the 944 model that it replaces. The 968 coupe with six-speed gearbox is $39,850, compared to $43,350 for last year's 944 S2. The 968 cabriolet is $51,000; the 944 ragtop was $50,350.

In the carryover 911 Carrera series (two-wheel drive and 4wd), prices are up $1,985 to $2,565. The 911s start at $63,900 for 1992. A new 911 America roadster is $87,000, and the 911 Turbo coupe is $98,875, up $3,875.

Give Porsche the distinction of pricing the first 1993 model. The 928-GTS coupe will be $80,920, up from $77,500 for 1991. The 1993 model is scheduled to go on sale next spring.

Madza names new president

TOKYO — Mazda Motor Corp. President Norimasa Furuta has been replaced as the company's top operating officer by Executive Vice President Yoshihiro Wada, a former banker who joined the company just eight years ago.

The corporation's board of directors late last week moved Wada into the president's post

see LATE NEWS, 2

New technology will improve 626's mpg.

Mazda goal: 27.5 mpg

New components slated for U.S. '93s

LINDSAY CHAPPELL
Staff Reporter

Mazda will try to squeeze out an average of 27.5 mpg for 1993 models built in Michigan by changing some drivetrain components and taking weight out of other components.

Mazda said added technology also will help the cars achieve the required corporate average fuel economy of 27.5 mpg for a domestic fleet.

The 626 sedan and MX-6 coupe, both built in Flat Rock, Mich., will become the first Japanese-brand, Japanese-built cars to become a domestic fleet next year when their North American content level passes 75 percent.

Neither car currently meets the standard required by the EPA — 1992 mileage ranges from 21 to 27 mpg — but Mazda is confident they will. If not, the carmaker could face millions of dollars in federal fines.

"We fully expect to meet or exceed the 27.5-mpg requirement," said Tom McDonald, a spokesman for Mazda Motor of America Inc. "Mazda certainly doesn't intend to put itself in the position of not meeting it."

Until now, the cars have been part of Mazda's import fleet and have been averaged with other cars having higher fuel-economy.

Mazda has been pushing for lighter componentry in recent years, and McDonald said the new cars will probably weigh less than current models, which contributes to better mileage. He said the models will have a wide range of new technological features and new drivetrain components that will increase mileage.

McDonald also noted that EPA certification does not depend on the fuel-economy figures published by the agency, but on a separate set of tests.

"The numbers you see on the car's window sticker, or in the EPA guidebook, are somewhat misleading. That's not what the EPA goes by," he said. "The actual testing can result in a figure that's five points higher than those figures."

The fleet average mileage for the Flat Rock-built cars will depend on how many of each is sold, so it cannot be determined until the end of the model year. AN

Japanese prepare 'gifts' for Bush

MAX GATES
Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON — President Bush will get a boost to his political fortunes as he tries to improve U.S. trade prospects during his upcoming 12-day trip to the Far East.

Japanese leaders say openly that they would like to see Bush reelected next year and that they will not send him home empty-handed.

They are likely to agree to increase purchases of U.S.-made products, including autos and auto parts, when Bush and his contingent of business leaders visit Japan Jan. 7-10 on the final leg of the president's four-stop trip.

"This will be a gift for Mr. Bush, something he can take back," said an executive of one Japanese automaker.

Japanese automakers set the stage last week with a new round of overseas spending targets, and further announcements are expected to coincide with the visit to Tokyo and Kyoto.

Japan's interest in Bush's reelection stems from the president's opposition to tariffs or quotas on Japanese products entering the United States, despite growing complaints about the $40 billion U.S. trade deficit with Japan.

"Bush's stance is not to be protectionist," said an official of another Japanese automaker, who asked not to be named.

Bush's re-election "would be positive for Japanese industry," he said.

In contrast, Democrats in Congress and conservatives backing Republican presidential challenger Pat Buchanan have been arguing

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Makers boost import goals ➤ 28

Chevy, Ford fight fiercely to win pickup sales race

ARLENA SAWYERS
Staff Reporter

The winners of the "best-selling-vehicle" race for the 1991 calendar-year could very well be the buyers of full-sized pickup trucks. They are being bombarded with year-end incentives from Ford Division and Chevrolet.

Through Dec. 10, defending champion Ford's F-series pickups led by 12,247. For calendar 1990, the F-series trucks won by 34,526 units.

Ford is offering consumers combined incentives of as much as $1,500 on 1991 and 1992 F-series pickups. By matching a Ford program in addition to its regular incentives, Chevrolet is offering as much as $2,500 in combined consumer and dealer rebates on 1991 and 1992 C/K pickups.

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correction

Alfa Romeo Distributors of North America notes that the 1992 price of $34,990 for the 164S sedan is 5.3 percent higher than the final 1991 price after adjusting for equipment made standard and is 9.2 percent higher before the adjustment. The Dec. 9 issue reported that the unadjusted price is up 13 percent. The error resulted from an incorrect 1991 price supplied by Alfa Romeo.

JIM DUNNE/POPULAR MECHANICS

Mark VIII unmasked

These spy photos show an undisguised prototype of the 1993 Lincoln Mark VIII, slated to bow next summer. The car retains the trademark spare-tire bulge in the trunk lid. Power is from a double overhead camshaft version of Ford's 4.6-liter modular V-8 said to be rated near 300 horsepower.

latenews

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and named Furuta vice chairman. Former President Keniichi Yamamoto remains chairman of Mazda.

Furuta, 63, had served as president since December 1987.

Wada, 60, joined Mazda in 1983, and since August 1988 he has been executive vice president and general manager in charge of corporate planning operations.

Wada's background is in finance. He joined Mazda after a 28-year career at Sumitomo Bank Ltd., where his last job was general manager of the head office. The bank and related companies own about 10 percent of Mazda.

— Richard Johnson

Ford recalls vans, Town Car

DEARBORN, Mich. — Ford Motor Co. is recalling approximately 380,000 1989 model F-Series light trucks and 1989 to 1991 model Econolines and Club Wagons equipped with gasoline engines and dual fuel tanks. Diesel-powered vehicles are not affected.

It is possible that the fuel tank selector valve, designed to control the fuel flow between the tanks and the engine, may malfunction. Should the valve fail, there is the potential for over-filling one of the tanks, which would cause fuel to leak out the inlet pipe past the filler cap.

In a separate action, Ford is recalling 80,000 1991 Lincoln Town Cars to replace the hood latch assemblies. In some cases, the auxiliary hood latch may not fully engage.

If the primary hood latch does not engage, such as when the hood is not tightly closed, the auxiliary latch may not hold the hood in place. Such a failure would cause the hood to open while the vehicle is being driven.

Most makers trim incentives

WEST CHESTER, Pa. — Five of the six largest vehicle manufacturers reduced their incentives from year-ago levels, according to a report released last week.

Autofacts Inc., an information and planning center which tracks incentives, said only Chrysler Corp. substantially increased average cash incentives by adding a variety of regional incentives.

For October/November 1991, Chrysler incentives averaged $3,744 or 71 percent higher than the same period in 1990. Industrywide, the average incentive during that same period was $1,625, a 7 percent decline from last year.

General Motors, Ford Motor Co., Toyota Motors Sales U.S.A. Inc., American Honda Motor Co. Inc. and Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A. reduced their October/November 1991 incentives from year-ago levels.

UAW, GM buy child care spot

FLINT, Mich. — General Motors and the UAW last week purchased three acres of land and a 16,000-square-foot building in Flint for a joint pilot child care center.

The center, scheduled to open in April, is for children of GM's 40,000 UAW workers in the Flint area who work at 13 GM facilities.

Ford appoints three to NAAO

DEARBORN, Mich. — Ford's North American Automotive Operations appointed three senior officials, effective Jan. 1.

Max Jurosek was named to the newly created position of senior vice president. He will report to Alex Trotman, executive vice president of the group, and will oversee the review and analysis of investment efficiency initiatives for future product and manufacturing programs.

Robert Transou was appointed general manager of Powertrain Operations, succeeding Jurosek. He reports to Trotman and will oversee Engine Operations, Transmission and Chassis Operations, Casting Operations, and powertrain engineering.

Robert Adams was appointed to the new position of director of engineering and manufacturing for Powertrain Operations. He will report to Transou.

NADA sees '92 at 13.5 million

WASHINGTON — Sales of new cars and light trucks will soar to 13.5 million units in 1992, compared with 12.5 million in 1991, according to the National Automobile Dealers Association.

"Lack of consumer confidence is not the main culprit behind weak sales," said Tom Webb, NADA's chief economist. "It is due to lack of money. Consumers are trying to rebuild their savings."

NADA's forecast is in line with those of industry analysts, who say sales could be as high as 14.3 million units in 1992. General Motors forecasts a slight recovery with car and light-truck sales at 13.5 million to 14 million. Chrysler Corp.'s estimate is 13.5 million.

Dealers should expect looser credit, more leasing and fewer customers with a negative equity position in their car loans, says Webb.

— Charles M. Thomas

Jaguar XJ220 at Detroit show

MAHWAH, N.J. — Jaguar Cars Inc. will showcase its 200 mph supercar at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Jan. 11-19.

The XJ220 topped 212 mph in speed trials at the Fort Stockton proving grounds in Texas earlier this year, Jaguar said. The car will not be sold in the United States.

briefly

Mercedes ad pitch backfires

New York ad agency Slater Hanft Martin recently took out two ads in *The New York Times* courting Mercedes-Benz. The idea was to wrangle an invitation to compete for the carmaker's $90 million account now in review. The first ad was in Japanese and bore the Mercedes-Benz logo. The second ad, also with the logo, had the English translation: "In today's car market you don't have the luxury of working with anyone else." The English ad gave the agency's name and phone number. The agency got an immediate response — a letter from Mercedes' lawyer warning the agency that it was infringing on the Mercedes logo and to cut it out.

STAY PLUGGED IN — The official pace car for the 103rd Tournament of Roses parade will be a **Chrysler** prototype electric minivan. The Chrysler TEvan will lead floats and bands through the streets of Pasadena, Calif., on Jan. 1. The van, which Chrysler expects to produce by the mid-1990s, is powered by a nickel-iron battery. The advanced-technology van reflects the parade's "Voyages of Discovery" theme, parade organizers said.

BAN ON ANTIPERSPIRANTS — It's no *secret* anymore. There is a *ban* on certain antiperspirants at **Chrysler Corp.'s** Jeep plant in Toledo, Ohio. Flakes from antiperspirants containing aluminum zerconium can filter out of workers' garments and float onto the surface of vehicles as they are prepared for painting. The paint will not stick to the flakes, which form tiny depressions in the paint and cause thousands of dollars in damage to the vehicles. Certain hairsprays and eyedrops are also culprits in paint problems which affect all U.S. vehicle assembly plants, a Chrysler spokesman said. He said antiperspirants and deodorants that do not contain chemicals responsible for damage can be used by workers in the paint shop. Everyone is *sure* glad about that.

LOST VACATION — President Bush and leaders of the Big 3 waited until after their holidays to visit Japan, but they'll tromp all over the Japanese year-end holiday. The entourage arrives Jan. 6, the first day back to work after the New Year's break when Japanese families get together. To prepare for the visit, public relations people and other white collar workers expect to work through the holidays. George, if you're sorry, say, *gomen nasai.*

CALIFORNIA HERE I COME (I HOPE) — Former Hyundai executive Art Meissner says he's ready to trade Colorado for California — and retailing for wholesaling. After his stint as head of **Hyundai Motor America** in Fountain Valley, Calif., Meissner moved to Colorado, where he sold cars until selling his dealerships to Denver Bronco quarterback John Elway earlier this year. Now, Meissner is talking to **Kia Motors Corp.** about being its top-ranking American executive, which would be his ticket back to California — and to running an import company. "If you're a skier, this place is great," Meissner said. "But if you want opportunity with an import company, Southern California is the place to be."

Meissner: It's the place to be

Chrysler cut its costs and looks leaner

MARY CONNELLY
Staff Reporter

Even as General Motors braces for years of retrenchment, Chrysler Corp. has already begun reaping the benefits of two years of painful cost cuts and white-collar reductions.

GM is starting down the path that Chrysler began treading in 1989 in pursuit of a "lean" organization.

In the past year, Chrysler has been the target of much negative media coverage of its performance and prospects. Now, as the glare of the national media spotlight turns to GM, Chrysler can point to gains made through fundamental changes in the organization.

While GM hopes to wring out $5 billion in annual costs by 1995, Chrysler says it has already has squeezed $3 billion in annualized costs from its operations in just over two years. In 1991 alone, 3,000 salaried jobs will have been trimmed — a 10 percent decline, compared to a 5 percent cut in 1991 at GM.

Chrysler's salaried and hourly automotive work force will total at 113,500 employees when the year closes, down from a peak of 135,200 workers in October 1987, following Chrysler's purchase of American Motors.

And there is no end in sight to the reductions.

Chrysler will scrape out an additional $500 million in cost savings and eliminate more white-collar jobs in 1992. And the company expects to trim an additional $300 million to $500 million annually for years to come.

"We are very much in pursuit of the lean system," said Chrysler President Robert Lutz. "We still have in our total cost structure billions of dollars of as-yet-unidentified waste, and it's just a matter of finding it.

In July 1989, Chrysler began a $1 billion cost-reduction campaign that grew to $3 billion in 1991. The company said it achieved the $3 billion in annualized reductions in the third quarter of this year.

"At the end of every year, we are going to have fewer salaried heads than we had the year before, and it's never going to stop," Lutz said.

By the end of December, Chrysler will have 27,000 salaried automotive employees in North America, including 1,800 temporary contract employees. At the end of 1990, the salaried automotive head count was 30,000, including 2,800 contract employees.

The work force reduction was achieved through attrition, special early-retirement programs, voluntary termination incentive programs and a "relatively small" number of layoffs, said Anthony St. John, Chrysler vice president of employee relations.

Chrysler hopes to avoid layoffs as it eliminates more jobs.

Chrysler's automotive hourly work force in North America rose slightly in 1991: 86,500 at the end of October 1991, up from 85,350 at the end of 1990.

The company is not yet perfectly lean. According to an *Automotive News* calculation of plant utilization based on straight-time, two-shift capacity, Chrysler produced at just 67.8 percent of the capacity of its 10 assembly plants for the 1991 model year — higher than GM's percentage, but lower than that of Ford Motor Co.

One measure of Chrysler's success was noted by Wall Street auto analysts when the company reported third-quarter earnings.

Chrysler surprised analysts by posting a lower-than-anticipated loss of $82 million for the quarter — a pittance compared to GM's loss of $1.06 billion and Ford Motor Co.'s loss of $574.4 million.

In a year-end statement issued last Thursday, Chairman Lee Iacocca said: "We kept our costs down while protecting our investment in the future.

"Losing less money than our competitors is no honor, but it does say that Chrysler is in shape for recovery."

Chrysler began streamlining after the AMC purchase in August 1987, which swelled its hourly and salaried employment to a peak of 135,200 workers in October of that year.

Then in mid-1989, Iacocca began warning that a recession was in the offing and the company had to be trimmed.

Chrysler's new shape and size in the decade ahead will be determined by a system called "process redesign." Essentially, process redesign takes a single task, breaks it down into steps and identifies steps that can be eliminated.

Automaker employment, '91 vs. '90

U.S. and Canadian employment by the Big 3 and the Japanese breaks down this way:

FORD
- Salaried automotive work force: down 5.5 percent to 44,793
- Hourly automotive work force: down 2.5 percent to 108,550

CHRYSLER
- Salaried: down 10 percent to 27,000
- Hourly: up 1.3 percent to 86,500

GENERAL MOTORS
- Salaried automotive: down 5 percent to 91,000
- Hourly automotive: down 7.4 percent to 338,000

BIG 3 COMBINED
- Salaried: down 10,600
- Hourly: down 29,600

JAPAN
- Total OEM transplant, r&d, sales company, port and subsidiary employment in U.S. and Canada: 55,256, up 6 percent from 52,091 in 1990.

Source: Company-supplied figures, Automotive News calculations

Transplant payrolls grow

LINDSAY CHAPPELL
Staff Reporter

Suppliers also on diet ➤ 26

As General Motors shrinks its U.S. operations, another auto industry group is growing on American soil.

Japanese transplant car manufacturers and sales companies now employ about 45,000 people in the United States, and another 6,000 in Canada — up almost 10,000 jobs in two years, according to an *Automotive News* compilation of employment figures given by the nine Japanese automakers operating in the United States.

But that doesn't come close to making up for the jobs axed by the U.S. Big 3. This year alone, the Big 3 dropped more than 11,000 salaried jobs. GM alone has cut 25,000 U.S. hourly jobs in 1991.

Thousands of employees at U.S. companies now owe their livelihood to supplying Japanese car plants. According to a formula used by the U.S. General Accounting Office, as many as 90,000 jobs at U.S. and Japanese-transplant parts companies support the Japanese plants. The expanding Japanese-owned parts makers alone account for about 60,000 jobs.

Of the 45,000 jobs at Japanese automakers and sales companies, about 30,000 are at transplant assembly factories and U.S.-Japan joint ventures. The other 15,000 jobs cover white collar workers, including about 3,000 people at Japanese companies' U.S. research and development operations.

Both blue and white collar employment by Japanese-owned firms will continue to grow. Transplant carmakers plan to open or expand four more factories in the next two to three years, meaning another 6,000 assembly jobs alone.

One importer released a comment on the GM cuts immediately after last week's announcement.

Robert McCurry, the outspoken executive vice president of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc., said, "GM management had to do what it believed to be best for the company. We empathize with them, and hope they will be successful."

Dealers OK cuts, but blame Japan

LIZ PINTO
Staff Reporter

General Motors dealers voiced tentative support of GM Chairman Robert Stempel's plans to trim the company to achieve profitability.

In telephone interviews, dealers agreed with Stempel's "lean capacity approach" and empathized with employees who could face layoffs.

Many dealers blamed imports for much of GM's dilemma.

- **Philip Buxbaum,** owner of Hayes Chevrolet-Buick in New Milford, Conn.: "GM was definitely at too much capacity, so in that respect what they are doing with plants makes a lot of sense. But we have to stop the Japanese. The government needs to put quotas on Japanese imports."
- **Bill Lehman,** owner of William Lehman Buick in Miami, Fla.: "I guess if I was losing a half-billion dollars a month I would be taking drastic action, too. But I also think the American government has to work closer with the three domestic manufacturers so that they can return to stability, much less profitability."
- **Rick Parker,** part-owner of Parker Cadillac, Little Rock, Ark.: "What Stempel is doing probably needed to be done because of the economic climate. But I would like to see the government come out with a 10 percent rebate for anything American made for 90 days."
- **Tom Sheehan,** owner of Sheehan Pontiac-GMC Trucks in Lighthouse Pt., Fla.: "Stempel's announcement came on a sad day because it is indicative of the state of manufacturing in this country and sad because of the employees and their families that will be negatively affected.

"But from a strict business standpoint, I look forward to the consequences of the decision. It will make for a healthier GM."

Ford has already cut

KATHY JACKSON
Staff Reporter

Ford Motor Co. President Philip Benton says he doesn't anticipate massive programs next year to cut employment at Ford. He says Ford achieved most of its necessary cuts this year.

Ford's U.S. and Canada salaried work force, excluding the financial group, dropped to about 44,793 this year, down 5.5 percent from last year. All but about 300 of the cuts were through attrition or special early buyouts.

Benton said any cuts in 1992 will be "significantly more modest. Where we need reductions, we hope to meet them through attrition."

Ford's fund of $1.6 billion to pay laid-off UAW workers 95 percent of their regular earnings throughout the current contract, which ends in 1993, is in no danger of running out, he said. He said Ford probably won't ask the UAW to reopen the contract.

Ford has 108,550 U.S. and Canadian hourly automotiveworkers, down 3.3 percent from 1990, said company spokesman Dick Routh.

The impending cutbacks at General Motors are old hat at Ford, which slashed jobs and capacity in 1979-82. From the end of 1978 to the end of 1990, Ford shrunk from a U.S. work force of 197,405 hourly and 74,469 salaried workers, a total of 271,874.

Routh said productivity has risen along with the cutbacks. In 1980, Ford produced about 13 vehicles annually per North American employee. By 1990, that had risen to 21 vehicles annually per employee.

Ford is utilizing 80 percent of its North American plant capacity now and expects that to increase to 90 percent in the first quarter of 1992, Benton said.

Staff Reporter Joseph Bohn contributed to this report.

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trucks

in brief

TRUCKS

LTV agrees to sell AM General

DALLAS — LTV Corp. agreed to sell its military truck manufacturing unit, AM General Corp., to The Renco Group Inc., a privately owned, New York-based holding company.

Terms of the sales agreement were not disclosed.

The sale, which is subject to approval by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, is part of LTV's plans to sell all of its LTV Aerospace and Defense Co. In 1986, LTV filed for Chapter 11 protection under the U.S. bankruptcy code.

A court hearing on the sale is scheduled for Dec. 23.

LTV acquired AM General from American Motors in 1983. AM General in South Bend, Ind., will begin delivering a civilian version of its military Hummer vehicle in 1992.

Navistar adds ABS, cuts engine lineup

CHICAGO — Navistar International Corp. will begin making anti-lock brakes a production option on its International 9000 series cabover and conventional tractors beginning in January.

ABS also will be available on International 8000 series conventionals by July 1992, according to Wayne J. Krzysiak, Navistar vice president of sales.

Navistar picked Allied-Signal Automotive's Bendix Heavy Vehicle Systems Group as its ABS supplier.

The Bendix full vehicle wheel control system has four speed inputs, including two from the rear drive axle and two from the front steering axle.

Navistar's new 360 and 466 engines, due out in January, will get a new DTA designation to signify they are air-to-air intercooled and turbocharged. The only exception is the DT-466 used in forward-control, transit-style school bus chassis. The engine is turbocharged without intercooling.

Navistar also will consolidate its engine line by dropping the 7.3-liter diesel at 130 horsepower, the DTA-466 at 220 hp and the DTA-466 at 250 hp with 700 pounds-feet of torque.

Bathke is first Ford sales grad

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Karl Bathke, a salesman with Salinas Valley Ford Sales in Salinas, Calif., is the first graduate of Ford's Heavy Truck University.

Bathke was the first of over 1,200 Ford Heavy Truck salespersons to enroll in the University for Master Associates certification. Attainment of that level requires completion of 15 comprehensive courses.

Ford launched the university in 1988 to train retail salespersons and management for heavy-truck dealerships. Three levels of certification or an alternative concentration of training in medium-duty, vocational, or over-the-road models are offered.

Class 8 sales expected to dip 20.7%

Year's tally may be lowest since 1983

JOSEPH BOHN
Truck Editor

Truck industry officials expect Class 8 U.S. retail truck sales to come in at slightly over 96,000 units for calendar 1991, which would be the lowest level since 1983.

The level also would represent a 20.7 percent decline from 1990, according to the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association.

The industry sold 88,438 Class 8 models during the first 11 months, off 20.2 percent from the year-ago period, according to MVMA.

The industry is looking for at least a modest upturn next year.

Volvo GM Heavy Truck Corp., for example, is looking for a 7 to 8 percent increase in calendar 1992 Class 8 sales to about 105,000, according to Dave Wilson, Volvo GM manager of market research and planning.

Freightliner Corp., which has been fairly conservative in its past forecasts, is looking for 110,000 U.S. Class 8 sales in 1992, according to Debi Nicholson, Freightliner director of public affairs.

Frank Prezelski, an analyst with Rothschild Inc. in New York, also expects at least 110,000 to 115,000 sales for Class 8 models next year.

On average, truck demand is still moving up ever so slowly, Prezelski said.

Volvo GM sees a slow recovery in 1992 that will come mostly in the second half.

"The economy has got to get back on its feet again. That's the key," Wilson said.

"Until consumer spending and industrial production start heading in the right direction, there will be no freight to haul," Wilson added.

Volvo GM, like other major manufacturers, is anticipating fiscal stimulus from the federal government and lower interest rates to improve consumer confidence.

The new Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, which authorizes spending of up to $119 billion on roads and highway repairs over the next six years, will particularly benefit manufacturers like Mack Trucks Inc., Ford Motor Co. and Volvo GM, which have strong sales in construction trucks.

Direct construction-related vehicles, such as dump trucks and mixers, account for about 12 to 15 percent of the market.

Even with a rebound, though, heavy-truck manufacturers need 125,000 to 130,000 sales to get back to strong profitability, Prezelski said.

One bright spot is that industry officials are predicting the recovery will last longer than previously anticipated.

Engine manufacturers had been cautioning that they would need costly, complex devices to meet stringent new diesel pollution standards mandated by the federal government for the 1994 model year.

Now, the manufacturers are saying they can meet those standards without such equipment, Wilson said.

Prezelski, confirming the report, said this will be a major benefit to manufacturers.

"It means they won't have to crank up factories to run at maximum speeds in 1993 only to have the plug pulled on them in '94," he said.

"It provides for a smoother production ramp up and transition from one year to the next." AN

Sales race in Class 8 trucks headed for a photo finish

Freightliner poised to upset Navistar

JOSEPH BOHN
Truck Editor

Navistar International Corp., Class 8's reigning sales champion over the past 25 years, was dethroned in November and may relinquish its position to Freightliner Corp.

The race for the calendar year sales crown may end in a photo finish with the UAW possibly determining the winner.

Last month, Freightliner moved firmly into the No. 1 spot in Class 8 sales for the first time in its history. According to the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, it outsold or tied Navistar in six of 11 months this year and grabbed the year-to-date lead at the end of November with calendar year sales of 20,619 units, compared with 20,140 for Navistar.

Navistar, formerly International Harvester, has been the heavy-truck sales leader for a quarter century. White Motors Corp. was the last company to hold the title, back in 1966, before Navistar took over, according to MVMA data.

With Freightliner's momentum, it seemed to be a shoo-in for the top spot in calendar 1991. But the company got hit with a UAW strike Dec. 4 at its Mt. Holly, N.C., plant. The plant normally builds 55 trucks a day; the strike cut output to 25 a day, though Freightliner officials were hopeful of getting up to 30 a day last week, said Debi Nicholson, Freightliner director of public affairs.

Workers at Mt. Holly voted for the UAW to represent them in April 1990 but they have been unable to reach a contract agreement.

No other Freightliner plants are affected.

Freightliner still has a shot, though slim, at upending Navistar for the calendar year. The race will be close but, as the history of vehicle sales reporting has shown, strange things can happen on the last day of the month.

Before the strike, the heavy-truck industry was expected to sell about 95,000 units for calendar 1991. Now it is expected to produce slightly over 96,000 units, said Frank Prezelski, an analyst with Rothschild Inc. in New York.

He anticipates Navistar pulling out all the stops to retain its No. 1 position. Navistar has ample inventory to fight Freightliner.

Earlier this month, Navistar reported a $165 million loss for fiscal 1991. A loss of sales leadership would be doubly troubling.

But it is questionable whether Freightliner can attain long-term sales leadership. The current market gives a disproportionate share of the sales mix to on-highway tractors at the expense of straight trucks, such as those used in construction, an official with Volvo GM Heavy Truck Corp. said.

Thus, the market currently favors West Coast-based Kenworth Truck Co., Peterbilt Motors Co. and Freightliner more than Ford Motor Co., Mack Trucks Inc. and Navistar. But when the economy improves, Navistar is likely to rebound more quickly. AN

NOVEMBER 1991 TRUCK SALES BY GVW

	Nov. 1991	Nov. 1990	11 mos. 1991	11 mos. 1990
Class 1-3	94,989	95,111	1,098,324	1,257,726
Class 4	1,261	1,562	18,189	24,523
Class 6	295	481	4,692	5,829
Class 7	990	1,617	17,210	24,628
Class 8	547	736	7,603	11,963
FORD	**98,082**	**99,507**	**1,146,018**	**1,324,669**
Class 6	11	0	31	0
Class 7	40	0	164	0
Class 8	1,964	1,702	20,619	21,432
FREIGHTLINER	**2,015**	**1,702**	**20,814**	**21,432**
Class 1-3	73,983	85,128	980,292	1,162,923
Class 4	119	37	1,579	40
Class 5	9	11	118	233
Class 6	130	879	2,517	8,120
Class 7	428	522	5,499	6,819
CHEVROLET	**74,669**	**86,577**	**990,005**	**1,178,135**
Class 1-3	21,080	22,689	259,989	301,663
Class 4	59	2	911	3
Class 5	34	31	372	1,962
Class 6	211	429	3,092	5,076
Class 7	790	991	12,044	13,406
GMC	**22,174**	**24,142**	**276,408**	**322,110**
Class 7	51	15	288	374
Class 8	913	1,089	10,464	13,334
KENWORTH	**964**	**1,104**	**10,752**	**13,708**
Class 6	28	46	452	1,015
Class 7	39	62	606	1,357
Class 8	793	904	9,487	13,449
MACK	**860**	**1,012**	**10,545**	**15,821**
Class 6	92	33	394	492
Class 7	198	74	831	1,115
MERCEDES-BENZ	**290**	**107**	**1,225**	**1,607**
Class 4	0	0	27	52
Class 5	0	2	25	105
Class 6	352	723	7,106	11,471
Class 7	1,299	1,683	27,656	28,359
Class 8	1,352	1,541	20,140	25,081
NAVISTAR	**3,003**	**3,949**	**54,954**	**65,068**
Class 7	10	18	202	340
Class 8	768	969	8,503	11,049
PETERBILT	**778**	**987**	**8,705**	**11,389**
Class 7	159	86	1,128	717
Class 8	1,060	1,306	10,623	13,031
VOLVO/GM HEAVY	**1,219**	**1,392**	**11,751**	**13,748**
Class 1-3	2	24	186	287
Class 4	13	0	67	0
Class 5	34	53	376	480
Class 6	25	39	489	602
Class 7	40	40	593	846
HINO	**114**	**156**	**1,711**	**2,215**
Class 1-3	62	40	622	618
Class 5	49	90	674	875
Class 6	46	54	513	491
Class 7	27	46	339	464
NISSAN DIESEL	**184**	**230**	**2,148**	**2,448**
Class 1-3	351	509	5,436	5,977
Class 4	130	46	1,120	600
Class 5	77	21	816	355
Class 6	72	58	745	1,759
Class 7	24	17	223	548
ISUZU TRUCK	**654**	**651**	**8,340**	**9,239**
Class 1-3	136	150	1,640	1,683
Class 5	56	54	593	597
Class 6	37	13	362	242
Class 7	37	53	307	498
MITSUBISHI FUSO	**266**	**270**	**2,902**	**3,020**
SCANIA Class 8	**3**	**9**	**48**	**98**
Class 1-3	0	135	908	1,498
Class 4	0	32	297	485
Class 5	0	12	149	226
Class 6	0	13	96	143
IVECO TRUCKS*	**0**	**192**	**1,450**	**2,352**
WESTERN STAR Class 8	**56**	**0**	**556**	**816**
Class 1-3	120,941	118,646	1,449,102	1,684,614
Class 6,7,8	25	35	395	531
OTHER TRUCKS	**120,966**	**118,681**	**1,449,497**	**1,685,186**
CLASS 1-3	**311,544**	**322,432**	**3,796,499**	**4,416,969**
CLASS 4	**1,582**	**1,679**	**22,190**	**25,703**
CLASS 5	**259**	**274**	**3,123**	**4,833**
CLASS 6	**1,299**	**2,768**	**29,489**	**35,249**
CLASS 7	**4,132**	**5,224**	**67,090**	**79,471**
CLASS 8	**7,481**	**8,291**	**88,438**	**116,784**
TOTAL TRUCKS	**326,297**	**340,668**	**3,997,829**	**4,673,020**

*1991 figures are Automotive News estimates. Source: Automotive News Data Center and MVMA

Mazda sets course for 250-horsepower version of Miata

$60,000 image car has V-6 from 929

RICHARD JOHNSON
Staff Reporter

TOKYO — Mazda Motor Corp. is planning its own "Cobra," a rebodied 250-horsepower version of the MX-5 Miata that is likely headed for production as a limited-edition model. Some could reach the United States.

Dubbed M2 1006, the forthcoming car is under development at company's new M2 Inc. experimental product planning center in Tokyo.

At more than $60,000 a pop, the M2 1006 would be Mazda's ultimate image car and an answer of sorts to the Acura NSX.

The running prototype has dramatically flared front and back wings which give it a much wider and more aggressive stance than the Miata.

Power comes from the 929's 3.0-liter V-6 and road characteristics are courtesy of the new RX-7's chassis.

The M2 1006 has been in the works for the past year at Mazda's Yokohama development center, and it is now being supervised at the M2 headquarters, where the rough-hewn prototype is housed in the basement of the recently opened four-story structure.

Company officials said that if they decide to go ahead with the project, the car could be in production in two to three years. Other sources say the M2 1006 may appear as early as next year as an auto show attraction.

Within M2, the M2 1006 prototype is referred to as the "Eunos Cobra" because of its resemblance to the Ford V-8 powered sports car classic of the 1960s.

Eunos is an upscale Mazda sales channel in Japan that markets the Miata as the Eunos Roadster.

Much as the Miata is a modern incarnation of classic British two-seater sports cars of the 1960s, the M2 1006 is viewed here as a modern rendition of Carroll Shelby's original Cobra.

A limited production run of 500 is being discussed.

Distribution plans are not finalized, though besides the Japanese domestic market, Mazda is eyeing sales in the United States and Germany.

Pricing is not settled, but officials are planning on the basis of an 8 million yen ($62,500) sticker.

Mazda will likely use an Alpha-numberic badge, probably the M2 1006 moniker it now carries as a prototype.

The prototype's engine bay is packed tight with the twin-cam 24-valve 3.0-liter V-6. The current output is about 210 hp, but engineers are aiming at production-car performance of 240 to 250 hp. That compares the 120-hp output of the current 1.6-liter, four-cylinder Miata.

The M2 1006 chassis is borrowed from the RX-7, with double-wishbone suspension and ventilated disc brakes.

The Miata's bespoilered body is stiffened and a rollbar added.

The prototype is fitted with 16-inch Pirelli tires and rigid sport seats.

The length of the M2 1006 is identical to the Miata, but the wheelbase has been extended slightly.

Styling was done by a small, outside consultant, which Mazda officials are keeping secret.

Product development officials said the current shape of the M2 1006 is essentially frozen, though details of the front window are still being refined.

Japan gets pumped-up Miata

TOKYO — Mazda Motor Corp. has launched a souped-up, limited edition of the Miata/Eunos roadster to mark the opening of a new research and vehicle development subsidiary in Tokyo.

The center, M2 Inc., is based in a new four-story structure housing a small-scale experimental studio where M2 staff will concentrate on "soft" aspects of product development.

The non-traditional unit will study consumer tastes in metropolitan Tokyo and plug the findings into the corporation's mainstream product development. M2 is concentrating on image-enhancing, high-performance niche models with its youngish staff of 25 designers, engineers and product planners.

To mark the start-up of the unit, Mazda launched the M2 1001, a special-edition of the Miata/Eunos that will sell for nearly twice the price of a stock version. The vehicle will be sold only in Japan.

The Miata's 1.6-liter engine has been overhauled to accommodate modified pistons, camshaft, flywheel and exhaust manifold. Output has been increased from 120 horsepower to 130 at 6,500 rpm and higher maximum torque.

Although sheet metal remains the same, the M2 1001 gets a front spoiler with integrated fog lamps, a rear spoiler, aerodynamic aluminum door mirrors and new interior details.

Other features include a rigid rollbar and specially tuned chassis and suspension. Interior modifications are aimed at improving functionality.

Mazda says only 300 M2 1001 units will be produced, and all will be the same dark blue-black color. The car will sell for 3.4 million yen ($26,500) and would-be buyers must place orders in person at the M2 headquarters.

— *Richard Johnson*

Europe expects record '91 sales despite Nov. dip

DIANA T. KURYLKO
Staff Reporter

FRANKFURT — Weighed down by a 19 percent skid in the German market, European new-car sales slid 7.7 percent last month to an estimated 974,000 units. Sales for the 11 months through November were virtually unchanged from a year earlier, at 12.7 million units.

But analysts say they still expect sales in the 17 countries to hit a record 13.5 million units this year, up 1.7 percent over last year, on the basis of record first-half demand in Germany.

Despite the November slide, German sales for the 11 months were still 30 percent ahead of a year earlier, at 3.95 million units. Analysts expect the country to post record sales of at least 4.1 million units for the year, and then retrench to about 3.5 million in 1992.

"The German market is weakening; November reflects a sharp drop in demand," said Arthur Maher, an analyst with DRI/Europe in London. "But in 1992, the European picture will be quite different. The United Kingdom and France will enjoy growth, and Italy will be stable."

Italy, Europe's second largest market, rose 17.7 percent in November, but was down 1.4 percent for the 11 months. Year-to-date sales dipped to 2.18 million units from 2.2 million last year.

Maher said Italy appears to be "exceedingly strong."

"We saw with the outbreak of the Gulf War that France and other markets went weak," he said. "But the Italian market was not affected adversely."

Sales in France fell 14 percent in November and were off 13.1 percent for the 11 months, dropping to 1.87 million units from 2.1 million a year earlier.

Sales there were expected to be off last month because of a 21-day strike at Renault, but Maher said the French market has remained slow since the first quarter, and likely will end the year at 2.09 million cars.

DRI forecasts sales in France will rise to 2.18 million units in 1992, contingent on overall improvement in the European economy.

The United Kingdom is in a similar slump, with November sales down 14.4 percent and 11-month figures off 21.2 percent from a year earlier, at 1.53 million units.

"In 1992, we continue to expect a recovery to 1.79 million units" in Britain, Maher said.

Sales in Spain were up 5.6 percent for the month of November but down 10.7 percent for the 11 months, to 819,200 units. Analysts are uncertain how Spain will end the year because the government is considering reducing the 33 percent value-added tax on cars, and consumers could delay purchases for a rollback.

Because of limited supplies of its new subcompacts, Volkswagen AG sales were down 5.4 percent in November from a year earlier.

General Motors Europe was off 16.5 percent for the month compared to November 1990.

Ford of Europe was off 5.4 percent for the month, reflecting the continuing recession in its home market in Britain.

Renault SA, affected by strike-related shutdowns and the ailing French economy, was down 17.6 percent in November from the year-ago period.

The Fiat Group showed a 3.4 percent increase for the November period, and sales for the Peugeot Group were up 1.3 percent.

For the 11-month period, Volkswagen Group, with 11-month sales of 2.03 million units, continued as the unchallenged European sales leader with a 16 percent market share.

Fiat Auto, with a 12.6 percent share, was down 9.3 percent for the 11 months, to 1.6 million cars.

General Motors and Ford remained neck-in-neck for the 11 month period, with Ford commanding a 12 percent share on sales of 1.52 million units and GM following with a 11.8 percent share on sales of 1.5 million units.

Ford was up 4.4 percent for the 11 months, while GM showed a 1.2 percent gain.

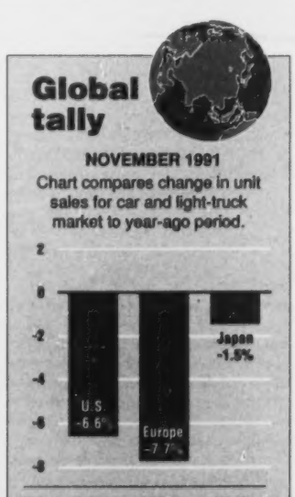
EUROPEAN SALES BY MANUFACTURER

Manufacturer	11 months, 1991	1991 share[1]	11 months, 1990	change (%) '91 vs. '90
Volkswagen	2,032,000	16.00	1,962,600	+ 3.50
Fiat Auto[2]	1,599,400	12.60	1,763,800	– 9.30
Ford[4]	1,519,800	12.00	1,450,000	+ 4.40
Jaguar	11,700	0.09	17,700	–33.70
General Motors[3]	1,503,800	11.80	1,480,700	+ 1.20
Peugeot S.A.[5]	1,513,600	11.90	1,624,000	– 6.80
Renault	1,256,800	9.80	1,237,000	+ 1.60
Mercedes-Benz	435,500	3.40	408,400	+ 6.60
Nissan	419,800	3.30	374,200	+12.20
BMW	386,300	3.00	341,400	+13.20
Toyota	346,400	2.70	346,300	+ 0.02
Rover	328,200	2.50	370,800	–11.50
Mazda	276,700	2.20	267,400	+ 3.30
Mitsubishi	183,300	1.40	169,900	+ 7.90
Volvo	185,400	1.40	221,600	+16.40
Honda	161,800	1.30	153,500	+ 5.40
Lada	100,100	0.70	101,600	– 1.50
Suzuki	98,400	0.70	94,400	+ 4.30
Daihatsu	51,200	0.40	39,500	+29.70
Subaru	50,800	0.40	48,100	+ 5.50
Saab	48,800	0.40	53,500	– 8.90
Skoda	47,000	0.30	27,300	+72.00
Isuzu (non-GM)	3,700	0.03	5,900	–37.10
Others	155,500	1.20	123,400	+24.00
Total	**12,716,000**	**100.00**	**12,683,000**	**+ 1.50**

1-doesn't total 100% because of rounding
2-Includes Alfa Romeo, Lancia
3-Opel; Vauxhall; GM-U.S., Canada; Isuzu; not Saab
4-Includes Jaguar
5-Peugeot, Citroen, Talbot

NEW-CAR SALES BY COUNTRY IN EUROPE

Country	11 months, 1991	Pct. change vs. 1990
Germany	3,950,400	+30.00
Italy	2,180,200	– 1.40
France	1,866,700	–13.10
United Kingdom	1,533,500	–21.20
Spain	819,200	–10.70
Netherlands	494,200	+ 0.20
Belgium-Luxembourg	483,600	– 0.50
Switzerland	293,400	– 3.70
Austria	288,400	+ 3.90
Portugal	206,300	+ 9.50
Sweden	172,600	–20.00
Greece	143,200	+35.31
Finland	88,300	–34.90
Denmark	80,000	+ 3.10
Ireland	65,600	–18.20
Norway	50,400	–14.00
Total	**12,716,000**	**+ 0.30**



MARTHA GRATTAN / AUTOMOTIVE NEWS

Toyota lowers profit forecast

RICHARD JOHNSON
Staff Reporter

TOKYO — Toyota Motor Corp., stung by the worldwide auto slump, a rising yen and increasing depreciation, investment and labor costs, has revised its earnings forecast sharply downward.

At a press conference, President Shoichiro Toyoda forecast a slight recovery for the slumping Japanese domestic market in 1992, predicting a rise in new-car registrations, excluding mini-vehicles, of 1.7 percent, to 5.9 million units.

Toyoda also called for an end to Japan's self-imposed restrictions on car exports to the United States. He said he remains opposed to the voluntary restraints "in light of the free trade principle." Japanese car exports to the United States have been restricted since 1981. The current ceiling is 2.3 million cars.

The biggest Japanese automaker said it expects its parent company's pretax profits to decline to 400 billion yen (about $3.1 billion) during the fiscal year which ends June 30, 1992. Earlier, Toyota had forecast earnings of $4.3 billion for the fiscal year. Pretax profits were $4.5 billion in fiscal 1991 and $5.7 billion in fiscal 1990.

Net sales of $70.3 billion are expected for the fiscal year, up from $67.2 billion.

Toyota has also rolled back its initial capital investment plan of $3.9 billion for the next fiscal year, although it did not specify the new level. The company is spending $4.5 billion during the current fiscal year.

The company forecast 1992 calendar-year domestic production of 4.08 million cars — about the same level as 1991 — and said that overseas output will rise 22 percent to 820,000 next year. Toyota said car exports will decline 3 percent to 1.65 million units and predicted Japanese domestic sales of 2,460,000 during 1992, up 3 percent from this year.

Toyoda also revealed plans for a new corporate philosophy aimed at reflecting the company's environmental consciousness, but did not provide details.

10-DAY CAR AND TRUCK SALES, BY MAKE

	Dec. 1-10, 1991	Dec. 1-10, 1990
ALFA ROMEO (imp. car)*	34	52
Acura (imp. car)	2,293	2,311
Domestic car	6,665	3,821
Imported car	3,591	2,843
Honda	10,256	6,664
AMERICAN HONDA	12,549	8,975
ASTON MARTIN (imp. car)*	1	1
BMW (imp. car)*	857	1,085
Domestic car*	2,349	3,127
Imported car*	0	33
Domestic truck*	75	91
Chrysler Division*	2,424	3,251
Domestic car*	6,614	8,792
Imported car*	470	586
Domestic truck*	8,505	7,650
Imported truck*	164	370
Dodge*	15,753	17,397
Domestic car*	689	910
Imported car*	220	98
Eagle*	908	1,008
Domestic truck*	3,285	3,267
Jeep*	3,285	3,267
Domestic car*	3,848	5,103
Imported car*	267	321
Domestic truck*	3,135	3,306
Plymouth*	7,250	8,730
Domestic car*	13,499	17,932
Imported car*	957	1,039
Domestic truck*	15,000	14,314
Imported truck*	164	370
CHRYSLER CORP.*	29,620	33,654
Imported car*	82	101
Imported truck*	59	81
DAIHATSU*	140	182
FERRARI (imp. car)*	16	16
Domestic car	18,230	27,413
Imported car	1,244	835
Domestic truck	28,898	33,850
Ford Division	48,372	62,098
Domestic car	3,450	6,719
Lincoln	3,450	6,719
Domestic car	5,357	6,040
Imported car	1,239	1,412
Mercury	6,596	7,452
Domestic car	27,037	40,172
Imported car	2,483	2,247
Domestic truck	28,898	33,850
FORD MOTOR CO.	58,418	76,269
Domestic car	9,354	8,961
Buick	9,354	8,961
Domestic car	5,054	4,579
Cadillac	5,054	4,579
Domestic car	25,636	28,919
Imported car	2,067	1,955
Domestic truck	22,795	26,277
Imported truck	56	39
Chevrolet	50,554	57,190
GMC	6,912	6,602
Domestic car	7,098	6,549
Domestic truck	934	426
Oldsmobile	8,032	8,975
Domestic car	12,481	14,220
Imported car	1,045	1,062
Domestic truck	630	567
Pontiac	14,156	15,849
Domestic car	2,198	299
Saturn	2,198	299
Domestic car	61,821	65,527
Imported car	3,112	3,017
Domestic truck	31,271	33,872
Imported truck	56	39
GENERAL MOTORS	96,260	102,455
HYUNDAI*†	1,682	2,097
Imported car*	187	161
Domestic truck	630	370
Imported truck*	1,897	2,899
ISUZU*	2,714	3,430
JAGUAR (imp. car)*	123	289
LAMBORGHINI (imp. car)*	3	3
LOTUS (imp. car)*	5	5
MASERATI (imp. car)*	4	4
Domestic car	681	984
Imported car*	2,078	2,254
Domestic truck	187	202
Imported truck*	3,035	2,965
MAZDA*	5,982	6,404
MERCEDES-BENZ (imp. car)*	979	1,339
Domestic car	1,145	875
Imported car*	1,650	1,056
Imported truck*	788	738
MITSUBISHI*	3,584	2,670
Infiniti	488	556
Domestic car	1,457	1,646
Imported car*	3,602	4,257
Domestic truck	1,505	1,360
Imported truck*	4,556	4,529
Nissan*	11,128	11,792
NISSAN MOTOR CORP.	11,528	12,347
PEUGEOT (imp. car)*	17	59
PORSCHE (imp. car)*	55	127
RANGE ROVER (imp. truck)*	66	95
ROLLS/BENTLEY (imp. car)*	4	20
SAAB (imp. car)*	347	323
STERLING (imp. car)*	0	53
Domestic car	387	487
Imported car*	668	1,139
SUBARU*	1,055	1,626
Imported car	91	86
Imported truck	327	295
SUZUKI†	419	381
Lexus (imp. car)	1,632	1,666
Domestic car	4,858	4,628
Imported car	5,281	5,816
Domestic truck	93	0
Imported truck	3,925	2,977
Toyota	14,157	13,421
TOYOTA MOTOR SALES	15,789	15,087
Audi (imp. car)*	185	256
Imported car*	1,208	1,738
Imported truck*	80	117
Volkswagen*	1,288	1,855
VWoA*	1,472	2,111
VOLVO*†	894	1,026
YUGO (imp. car)*	57	101
Domestic car	117,558	136,072
Imported car	34,505	37,122
TOTAL CAR	152,055	173,194
Domestic truck	77,584	83,968
Imported truck	14,953	15,103
TOTAL TRUCK	92,537	99,071
TOTAL CAR & TRK	244,593	272,265

*Estimated †Breakdown of North American built and imported car sales not available.
There were 9 selling days in the period this year and 8 last year.

Suppliers join automakers in slimming operations

Worker, spending cutbacks planned

LINDSAY CHAPPELL
Staff Reporter

Like their automaking customers, several large, international automotive suppliers are scaling down as the worst year in auto manufacturing since 1983 ends.

TRW Inc., Allied-Signal Inc. and Tenneco Inc. have announced they will cut 21,000 workers as they restructure, sell off units and reduce capital spending.

Earlier in the year, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Michelin Corp. and other major suppliers implemented restructuring programs.

Some of this month's moves began with non-automotive operations.

TRW's restructuring plan was prompted by setbacks in its defense and credit and information businesses, and Tenneco's moves were made partially in response to longstanding problems in its farm equipment operation.

But the shakeups among the key parts makers reveal how deeply the auto market is being affected by economic conditions.

Industry analysts believe other companies closely linked to the automotive market may face similar pressures.

■ TRW will lay off 10,000 of its 72,000 workers and divest itself of business units that account for $890 million in annual sales.

The company has not said yet which of its automotive operations will be closed or reduced. But TRW did say that increasing sales volume for air bags worldwide will help boost earnings next year — even if vehicle sales do not improve.

> "There is a squeeze on suppliers. They're being asked by the automakers to do two conflicting things at one time."
>
> **BERNARD CAMPBELL**
> DRI/MCGRAW HILL ANALYST

TRW makes a wide range of auto products, including air bags, steering gears, valves and seat belts. A company statement pledged continued support for the air bag and power rack-and-pinion steering system businesses.

Gorman: joins Asia trip

Chairman Joseph Gorman is among 21 business leaders joining President Bush on a 12-day trip to next week.

■ Allied-Signal, a $12-billion-a-year supplier of lighting and anti-lock brakes, said it will close or consolidate eight automotive plants in the coming months. In addition, it will close factories in Reno, Nev., and Salisbury, N.C., that are part of its Bendix Heavy Vehicle Systems group.

In October, the company announced other corporate changes, including the sale of automotive sensor and filter businesses.

The moves will cost Allied an $880 million charge against earnings and will result in layoffs of 5,000 workers.

■ Tenneco Inc. said last week it will eliminate 4,000 jobs in its farm equipment company and another 2,000 in other areas, including the automotive business.

A company spokesman said Tenneco Automotive also will be affected by a plan to chop $250 million out of 1992's capital spending program, but would not be more specific.

However, he said the division is a key source of profits for the corporation, and the company expects its profitability to be enhanced as auto sales rebound.

Bernard Campbell, director of automotive analysis for DRI/McGraw Hill in Lexington, Mass., noted that many smaller suppliers have attempted to scale back in the past two years of declining auto sales.

"There is a squeeze on suppliers," Campbell said. "They're being asked by the automakers to do two conflicting things at one time. The carmakers are being pressured to reduce costs, and they're asking their suppliers to do the same.

"But at the same time, the carmakers are also pushing them to improve products and technology," Campbell said. "This is not an easy time for suppliers to make a profit."

Early-December sales tumble 10.2 percent

ANNE E. WRIGHT
Chief Statistician

The economy remains sluggish and consumers continue to show caution as the holidays approach. Car and light-truck sales fell in the first 10 days of December, making it nearly impossible that December sales will rise above the year-ago total.

Overall sales of domestic and imported cars and light-trucks for the period fell 10.2 percent, to 244,593. Cars were off 12.2 percent and trucks 6.6 percent.

Domestic-car sales slid 13.6 percent, and imports were off 7.1 percent. Truck sales mimicked that pattern — domestics were down 7.6 percent and imports off 1.0 percent.

Sales were off for each of the Big 3. General Motors declined 6.1 percent; Chrysler Corp. dipped 12.0 percent, and Ford Motor Co. fell 23.4 percent. Chrysler's sales are estimated by *Automotive News*.

Despite GM's overall sales decline, three divisions posted gains. Cadillac was up 10.4 percent; GMC climbed 4.7 percent, and Buick was up 4.4 percent. Buick remains the only Big 3 car to post an overall gain for the 1991 calendar year.

Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc. reported an increase over the 1990 period as sales of domestically built cars gained 5.0 percent and trucks went up 31.8 percent.

American Honda Motor Co. Inc. gained 39.8 percent in the first 10 days of December. The Honda Division, which suffered a poor November, enjoyed a sales increase of 53.9 percent for Dec.1-10, while Acura slipped 0.8 percent.

MERCURY VILLAGER FOR 1993

Model	Wheelbase (inches)	Length (inches)	Width (inches)	Height (inches)	Curb Weight (pounds)	Base engine	Drive type	Body styles
Mercury Villager	112.2	189.2	73.7	67.6	3,982	3.0L, V-6	4wd	minivan

VILLAGER

New minivan enters crowded field

continued from PAGE 3

to expected to heavily conquest station wagon and competitive minivan owners, and should result in a high percentage of incremental business with up to 85,000 in annual sales, Miskowski said.

He said the division will take dealers to Florida and Arizona to drive the vehicle and learn how to sell its features.

"We're mapping out a plan for every Lincoln-Mercury-supervised dealer" — those not dualed with Ford — to get a list of nearby minivan owners, he said.

The Villager will go on sale officially in September as a 1993 model but begin appearing in showrooms in late June or July, L-M officials said. It will be available in only LS luxury or GS sporty trim versions.

The GS comes standard with such common items as power rack-and-pinion steering, power brakes, a brake-shift interlock system, tinted glass, interval windshield wipers, cloth-covered reclining bucket front seats and an AM/FM stereo with four speakers.

The LS version adds standard Bosch four-wheel anti-lock brakes, a rear window defroster, automatic speed control, power windows and door locks and front air conditioning.

The Mercury Villager has dimensions similar to Chrysler Corp.'s minivans.

Mercury is considering standardizing ABS, optional on the GS, "across the board," according to Miskowski.

The minivan meets all safety standards for passenger cars. But air bags won't be available until the 1994 model year. "Sure, we wish we had an air bag," Miskowski admitted, but said ABS is a more important safety feature.

The Avon Lake plant, with overtime, can produce up to 135,000 units a year. At that rate, Mercury would get 85,000 units and Nissan 50,000, said Stephen Lyons, Lincoln-Mercury's general marketing manager.

Miskowski predicted a 1-million-unit minivan market in the 1993 model year.

Officials expect to build only 2,000 units between April and June and about 40,000 in calendar 1992. Lincoln-Mercury will get about 28,000 to 30,000 of that, Miskowski said.

The single overhead camshaft Nissan engine generates 150 horsepower and 170 pounds-feet of torque.

An optional towing package gives the Villager a 3,500-pound towing capacity.

Although the Nissan engine is imported from Japan, Lincoln-Mercury officials said the Villager exceeds the 75 percent U.S. content minimum to make it a domestic vehicle under EPA rules.

INCENTIVE WATCH—DEALER INCENTIVES

NEW PROGRAMS

BMW (no expiration date)
- 750iL (1991) $10,000

CHEVROLET
- Cavalier, Geo Storm (1991-92 models, expires Jan. 5) 0-$1,000, quota
- C/K pickups (1991-92 models, expires Dec. 31) $1,000

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

ACURA (1991 models, expires Jan. 3)
- Legend sedan $2,500
- Legend coupe $3,000
- Integra (expires Feb. 3) $500

ALFA ROMEO (expires Dec. 31)
- 164, 164L automatic (1991) Up to $200 per car monthly in floorplan aid

AUDI (1991 models; expires Dec. 31)
- Audi 100 $3,500
- Audi 200 $4,000
- Other models (if dealer orders quota from Audi) $1,500-5,000 per sale
- Other models (if dealer does not order quota from Audi) $750-3,500 per sale

CHRYSLER CORP. (expires Dec. 31)
- Jeep Cherokee (1991) $500
- Jeep Cherokee (1992) $750

GENERAL MOTORS

Chevrolet (expires Feb. 4)
- Caprice (1992) $250-800, quota
- Camaro (1992) $300-750, quota
- Corvette ZR-1 (1992) $2,000
- Other Corvette (1992) $1,000
- Corvette ZR-1 (1991) $3,000
- Other Corvette (1991) $2,000
- Cadillac Allante (1991) (no expiration date) $7,500 on first sale, $8,500 on additional sales
- Pontiac Sunbird $300

HONDA (expires Dec.31)
- All 1991 models except CRX $500

ISUZU (1991-92 models, unless otherwise noted; expires Dec. 31)
- Cars* $800-1,800
- All pickups* $1,000-1,500
- 4x4 pickups (bonus, 1990-91) $500
- Trooper* $1,500-1,800
- Rodeo* $00-500

*Based on number sold

LOTUS (1991, no expiration date)
- Elan $5,000
- Esprit Turbo $11,000-15,000

MITSUBISHI (expires Dec. 31)

Rebates vary by region and apply to 1990-92 models.
- Mirage $500-1,000
- Eclipse 0-$1,300
- Galant 0-$1,750
- Pickups 0-$1,200
- Montero 0-$2,000

NISSAN (expires Jan. 3, unless otherwise noted)

1992 models
- Stanza $1,000
- Maxima GXE $800
- Sentra $300
- Pickups $900
- Pathfinder $600

1991 models
- Stanza $1,800
- Maxima $800
- 240SX $600
- Sentra $300
- Pathfinder $1,400
- Pickups $1,200
- 300ZX (expires Feb. 2) $2,500-3,500, quota

PEUGEOT (no expiration date)
- 405 $5,000
- 505 $6,000

SUBARU (expires Jan. 3)
- Legacy (1991) $1,200-1,700, based on region

SUZUKI (expires Feb. 3)
- Swift (1992) $400-700
- Swift (1991) $700-1,000
- Sidekick (1992) $200-700
- Sidekick (1991) $700-1,000

TOYOTA (expires Jan. 3, based on quota)
- Camry (1991), Corolla (1991-92) $500-700,
- Base 4x2 pickup (1991-92) $1,000-1,400,
- Other pickups $600-1,000,

VOLKSWAGEN (no expiration date)
- Passat (1991) $1,500
- Jetta, Fox, Golf (1991) $500
- All 1990 cars $500-1,500

VOLVO (1991 models; expires Dec. 31)
- 240 series $1,500
- 740 series $1,750-2,500
- 940 series $1,500-2,300
- 780 coupe $2,500

BMW dealer rebate tops 'em all; it's $10,000 on '91 750iL sedan

ARLENA SAWYERS
Staff Reporter

incentive WATCH

BMW is paying its dealers the industry's highest rebate, and Chrysler Corp. has announced a new consumer incentive program that offers national and regional payments.

Also, Chevrolet and American Honda Motor Co. Inc. are offering factory-to-dealer incentives on some 1991 and/or 1992 vehicles.

BMW is paying its dealers a rebate of $10,000 on its slow selling 1991 750iL four-door sedan. No expiration date was announced, dealers said.

Chrysler's new program began Dec. 21 and ends Jan. 31. It replaced the plan that was to expire Dec. 31.

National rebates range from $500 to $2,000; regional rebates are $500 to $1,500.

Chrysler is continuing its incentives of $500 for college graduates, $400 for first-time buyers of Jeep Wrangler; and $500 for adaptive controls for handicapped buyers.

In lieu of rebates, consumers may choose special finance rates ranging from 0 to 9.9 percent depending on vehicle, contract length and region.

Chrysler's special Gold Key Plus finance rates are still available on some vehicles.

For Dec. 17-31, **Chevrolet** is offering factory-to-dealer rebates of $1,000 on 1991 and 1992 C/K regular cab pickup and C/K chassis.

Also, through Jan. 5, Chevrolet dealers earn up to $1,000 on combined sales of 1992 and 1991 Cavaliers and Geo Storms based on performance against quota.

Through the end of the year, American Honda is paying its U.S. dealers $500 on sales of all 1991 **Honda** cars except the CRX.

Ford offers Hertz customers new-car rebates

LIZ PINTO
Staff Reporter

Ford Motor Co. wants to put Hertz customers in the drivers' seats of its new vehicles.

Ford is offering a $250 cash-back certificate to Hertz customers who rent a Ford Escort or Mercury Tracer. The offer is good toward the purchase or lease of any 1992 Ford, Mercury or Lincoln. Ford owns 49 percent of Hertz.

"This is one of many special marketing efforts we are trying to spur sales," said Carolyn Burke, marketing programs manager for Ford sales operations news. "Right now, any sale would be welcome."

A person who rents an Escort or Tracer between Nov. 15, 1991, and May 1, 1992, receives a letter outlining the cash-back offer. The letter is signed by Lee Miskowski, general manager of Lincoln-Mercury Division, and Ross Roberts, general manager of Ford Division.

The letter expresses thanks for renting a Ford vehicle from Hertz and says, "Because of your Hertz 'test drive,' we have a special cash-back offer just for you." Persons who return an enclosed card receive a $250 cash-back certificate that must be used before May 2. The coupon can be used in combination with other Ford incentives.

In California, Hertz renters of Lincoln Town Cars are the targets of a program that entitles them to a $500 cash-back coupon toward the purchase or lease of 1992 Lincoln Town Cars.

INCENTIVE WATCH — CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

NEW PROGRAMS

CHRYSLER CORP.

Expires Jan. 31. Finance rates in lieu of rebates run from 0 to 9.9 percent on Sundance, Shadow, Acclaim, Spirit, LeBaron sedan and Cherokee, and from 4.9 to 9.9 percent on other models.

In addition to the rebates on retail purchases listed here, Chrysler Corp. offers rebates under its Gold Key Plus Program. The rebates, which expire Dec. 31, are $250 to $2,000 on 1992 models and $150 to $1,975 on 1992 models.

1990-92 models

NATIONAL REBATES
- Chrysler Imperial $2,000
- Dodge Monaco $1,500
- Shadow $1,000
- Colt 3-door $500
- Dodge Ramcharger $2,000
- Eagle Premier $1,500
- Talon $1,000
- Summit 3-door $500
- Jeep Comanche $750
- Wrangler $500
- Plymouth Laser, Sundance $1,000
- Colt 3-door $500

REGIONAL REBATES: Northeast
- Chrysler LeBaron sedan $1,500
- Dodge Spirit $1,500
- Dodge Dakota $1,000
- Jeep Cherokee $1,500
- Plymouth Acclaim $1,500
- All Chrysler Corp. minivans $1,000

REGIONAL REBATES: Central, West
- Chrysler New Yorker Fifth Avenue $1,500
- New Yorker Salon, LeBaron sedan $1,000
- Dodge Dynasty, Spirit $1,000
- Dodge Ram gas pickup (Central only) $1,500
- Ram wagon $1,000
- Dakota $750
- Dodge Ram gas pickup (West only) $750
- Ram 50 pickup $500
- Jeep Cherokee $1,500
- Plymouth Acclaim $1,000
- All Chrysler Corp. minivans $500

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

FORD MOTOR CO.

1992 models

Expires Feb. 4. In lieu of rebates, finance rates of 2.9 to 7.9 percent are offered. Finance rates differ by vehicle lines and regions. No finance rate incentives on Lincoln models.
- Ford Festiva, Tempo, Taurus $500
- Escort GT and LX-E, Mustang, Thunderbird $750
- Probe, Taurus SHO, Crown Victoria $1,000
- F series, Aerostar $500
- Ranger $750
- Aerostar (Northeast), Bronco, Econoline (RV pkg.) $1,000
- Mercury Topaz, Sable $500
- Capri, Tracer LTS, Cougar $750
- Grand Marquis $1,000
- Lincoln Town Car, Mark VII, Continental $1,000

Pre-1992 models

1990-91 Ford Division models and 1991 Lincoln-Mercury models. Expires Feb. 4. In lieu of rebates, finance rates of 2.9 to 7.9 percent are offered. Finance rates differ by vehicle line and region.
- Ford Tempo, Taurus $400
- Taurus SHO $600
- Escort, Mustang, Thunderbird $750
- Festiva, Probe $1,000
- Ranger, F series, Aerostar, Econoline (except E-150 RV) $400
- Aerostar (Northeast), Bronco, Econoline E-150 (RV pkg.) $1,000
- Mercury Topaz, Sable $400
- Tracer, Cougar $750
- Capri $2,000

GENERAL MOTORS

Expires Feb. 4. Finance rates in lieu of rebates start at 2.9 percent for Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac; 6.9 percent for Chevrolet and GMC.

1992 models
- Buick Skylark* $250-750*
- Century, Regal* $250-1,000*
- Riviera $2,000
- Chevrolet Caprice $1,000
- Geo Metro and Storm $750
- Geo Prizm, Camaro, Beretta, Lumina $500
- Cavalier $500
- G van, S/T Blazer, Lumina APV $1,000
- Geo Tracker, Astro, S/T pickup $750
- C/K pickup $500
- GMC G-van, S15 Jimmy (except Typhoon) $1,000
- Sonoma (except Syclone, GT), Safari $750
- Sierra (except Crew Cab) $500
- Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera (national) $1,000
- Regional programs, various models $500-2,000
- Pontiac Trans Sport $1,000
- Grand Prix $750
- LeMans, Firebird $500

*Based on option package selected.

1991 models
- Cadillac All models except Allante (expires Dec. 31) $2,000
- Chevrolet Caprice $1,000
- Geo Metro, Camaro $750
- Geo Storm and Prizm, Beretta, Lumina $500
- Cavalier, Corsica $300
- V Blazer, Suburban, G-van, S/T Blazer, Lumina APV $1,000
- Geo Tracker, Astro, S/T pickup, R/V and C/K pickups $500
- GMC V Jimmy, Suburban $1,500
- S15 Jimmy, G-van, Safari $1,000
- Sonoma (except Syclone) $750
- Sierra, R/V pickups $500
- Oldsmobile - regional programs, various models $500-2,000
- Pontiac Trans Sport, LeMans, Firebird $1,000
- Grand Prix $750

HYUNDAI

49 states (expires Jan. 6)
- Excel (1992) $500
- Excel (1991) $1,000
- Scoupe (1992) $500
- Scoupe (1991) $750-1,000
- Sonata (1991) $500-1,500
- California only (1991 models, expires April 2) Excel, Scoupe $750-1,000
- Sonata $1,000-1,500

All states (1991 models, expires Jan. 6)
- All 1991 models if trade is a 1986-90 Hyundai $1,000

MAZDA (expires Jan. 3)
- Navajo (1991) $1,000
- Trucks (1992) $1,000

MITSUBISHI (expires Dec. 31)
- California (1990-91) Precis $500
- Hawaii (1990-91) Galant $1,500
- Eclipse $750
- Mirage $500
- Pickups, Montero $750-800

ROLLS-ROYCE/BENTLEY (1991 models; expires Dec. 31)
- All models Company pays U.S. luxury tax

SUBARU (expires Jan. 3)
- Legacy L and L Plus (1992) $500
- Loyale (1991-92) $500
- XT, XT-6 (1991) $2,000

Excalibur's new owner sets April goal for car

SALLY GARBO WEDDE
Special Correspondent

WEST ALLIS, Wis. — Excalibur Automobile Corp., which was purchased from bankruptcy court in November and hasn't produced a vehicle since June 1990, has hired workers to produce a car possibly by April.

The company plans to make four types of cars in its first year: the luxury Excalibur Series V roadster, phaeton and sedan, and a version of the more basic Excalibur Series III roadster.

The new Series III will be more "rustic" than Series V, owner Michael Timmer said. The luxury car will sell for about $75,000 and the more basic car, $50,000, he said.

Timmer said the Series III roadster will be redesigned, and six workers will produce the first car, possibly by April. Those six then will train 18 to 20 workers, who will build three or four cars a month.

The 27-year-old plant, which has been closed since July 1990, needs about $1 million worth of improvements, Timmer said. He will begin the improvements immediately.

Comptroller Warren Hammond said the company is trying to set up a dealer network in the United States as well as Germany, Japan, Italy and France. "I think the name Excalibur has a bigger charisma outside the U.S.," Timmer said.

Timmer, 40, a real estate developer who lives in Kottweiler-Schwanden, Germany, said he sold used Excaliburs as a hobby but had no relationship with the manufacturer until now. Scott Dennison, who was engineering director and, briefly, president of the company before the bankruptcy, is serving as vice president and chief engineer, Hammond said.

Timmer bought Excalibur Corp. out of bankruptcy court in November for $1.33 million.

Daihatsu nears Malaysia pact to produce cars

STEVEN VINES
Staff Correspondent

HONG KONG — Malaysia is poised to launch a second national car project in cooperation with Daihatsu Motor Co. Ltd.

The Japanese company reportedly will link up with Malaysia's UMW Holdings Berhad to manufacture sedans based on a Daihatsu model. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad told the state-run Bernama news agency that "the government has agreed 90 percent to the project."

The project would complement Malaysia's first national car company, which is making the Proton Saga. The Proton project is a joint venture between Mitsubishi Motor Corp. and the government. The Daihatsu project would be a joint venture with the private sector.

UMW is the local assembler and distributor of Toyota vehicles. Toyota Motor Co. of Japan owns 14 percent of Daihatsu Motor Co.

Final details are expected to be agreed early next year.

The new company is expected to receive the kind of preferential duty allowance enjoyed by the Proton project.

production

SCHEDULED JAN. PLANT CLOSINGS

All U.S. and Canadian plants are closed this week for the holidays.

Plant	Weeks down	Units lost/ week
CHRYSLER		
Bramalea, Ontario		†
Sterling Heights, Mich.	1/6, 1/13	
Dodge Shadow		1,900
Plymouth Sundance		1,700
FORD MOTOR CO.		
Dearborn, Mich.	1/6	3,700
Ford Mustang		
Edison, N.J.	1/6	4,900
Ford Ranger		
Kansas City, Mo.	1/6	4,400
Ford Tempo		
Mercury Topaz		
Kentucky Truck (Louisville)	1/6	1,300
Ford heavy trucks		
Lorain, Ohio	1/6, 1/13*	4,300
Ford Thunderbird		
Mercury Cougar		
Lorain, Ohio	1/6	4,400
Ford Econoline/Club Wagon		
Michigan Truck (Wayne)	1/6	3,000
Ford Bronco		
Ford F series		
Norfolk, Va.	1/6	3,200
Ford F series		
Oakville, Ontario	1/6	4,800
Ford Tempo		
Mercury Topaz		
Ontario Truck (Oakville)	1/6	2,795
Ford F series		
St. Louis	1/6	4,000
Ford Aerostar		
St. Paul, Minn.	1/6	3,400
Ford F series		
Ford Ranger		
St. Thomas, Ontario	1/6	4,800
Ford Crown Victoria		
Mercury Grand Marquis		
Wayne, Mich.	1/6	5,800
Ford Escort		
Wixom, Mich.	1/6**	4,100
Lincoln Continental		
Lincoln Mark VII		
Lincoln Town Car		
GENERAL MOTORS		
Detroit	1/6	
Chevrolet P-model		475
GMC P-model		30
Fort Wayne, Ind.	1/6, 1/13	
Chevrolet C/K pickup		3,400
GMC Sierra		1,175
Lake Orion, Mich.	1/6, 1/13, 1/20	
Cadillac DeVille		3,900
Olds. Ninety Eight		1,200
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 1)	1/6	6,000
Chevrolet Lumina		
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 2)	1/6	4,000
Buick Regal		
Chevrolet Lumina		
Pontiac, Mich. (East)	1/6, 1/13, 1/20	*
Chevrolet C/K pickup		
GMC Sierra		
Pontiac, Mich. (West)	1/6	
Chevrolet S10 pickup		2,285
Chevrolet S10 Blazer		3,550
GMC Sonoma		1,000
GMC S15 Jimmy		1,220
Shreveport, La.	1/6	
Chevrolet S10 pickup		5,100
GMC Sonoma/Syclone		1,100
Chevrolet S10 Blazer		3,100
GMC Yukon		50
Wentzville, Mo.	1/6	5,500
Buick Park Avenue		
Olds. Eighty Eight		
Pontiac Bonneville		

Total U.S. car	36,500
Total Canada car	19,600
Total U.S. truck	46,385
Total Canada truck	2,795
Total units lost week of 1/6	105,580

†Plant closed for retooling until spring 1992.
*Plant idled due to maintenance.
**Plant idled due to materials shortage.
Source: Automotive News Data Center

Highway death toll lowest since 1961

WASHINGTON — The death toll on the nation's highways is expected to drop to fewer than 41,350 in 1991, the lowest count in 30 years, said the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

That will be down 7 percent from 1990's 44,529 highway deaths, said Jerry Curry, NHTSA administrator.

The death rate per 100 million miles driven dropped to 1.9 this year, the lowest it has ever been, Curry said.

U.S. AND CANADA CAR AND TRUCK PRODUCTION

Vehicles are domestic unless noted. Vehicles are cars unless noted.

	Est. 12/16-12/21/91	Actual 12/9-12/14/91	Dec. Est.	Year 1/1-12/21/91	Year 1/1-12/22/90
LeBaron A	0	0	0	0	8,071
LeBaron J	1,200	1,258	4,029	29,240	52,026
New Yorker	1,300	1,457	2,757	14,598	34,876
Fifth Avenue	1,200	1,288	2,488	35,845	29,297
Imperial	400	356	756	9,156	24,489
Town & Country (trk.)	300	380	1,082	6,404	2,508
Total Chrysler	**4,400**	**4,739**	**11,112**	**95,244**	**151,267**
Horizon	0	0	0	0	4,327
Sundance	0	1,799	3,667	60,558	87,587
Acclaim	1,700	1,655	5,663	81,282	120,440
Voyager (trk.)	1,900	2,378	6,780	97,907	82,618
Voyager (Can. trk.)	1,832	2,216	6,327	108,504	101,143
Total Plymouth	**5,432**	**8,048**	**22,437**	**348,251**	**396,115**
Omni	0	0	0	0	4,078
Daytona	0	669	1,414	11,212	33,376
Shadow	0	2,270	4,442	68,318	95,681
Dynasty	1,800	1,824	3,624	112,865	123,047
Spirit	1,800	2,201	6,745	78,708	105,587
Monaco (Can.)	0	0	176	8,653	11,083
Caravan (trk.)	2,000	3,053	8,100	116,041	92,656
Caravan (Can. trk.)	3,289	4,130	11,477	150,384	126,769
Caravan C/V (trk.)	100	76	307	3,788	4,173
Caravan C/V (Can. trk.)	32	101	233	13,683	7,385
Dakota (trk.)	2,800	2,974	8,748	103,527	72,224
Ram pickups (trk.)	1,400	1,461	4,320	73,199	100,301
Ram Wagon (Can. trk.)	661	627	1,288	18,319	19,152
Ram Van (Can. trk.)	1,296	1,258	2,554	40,412	56,246
Total Dodge	**15,178**	**20,644**	**53,428**	**799,109**	**851,758**
Premier (Can.)	0	0	556	9,467	13,593
Cherokee (trk.)	4,200	4,293	12,741	150,319	151,230
Comanche (trk.)	100	135	352	5,457	9,576
Grand Wagoneer (trk.)	0	0	0	1,539	6,449
Wagoneer (trk.)	50	73	201	2,739	3,888
Wrangler (Can trk.)	1,590	1,940	5,433	65,277	58,184
Total Jeep-Eagle	**5,940**	**6,441**	**19,283**	**234,798**	**242,920**
Total U.S. car	**9,400**	**14,777**	**35,585**	**501,783**	**722,882**
Total Can. car	**0**	**0**	**732**	**18,120**	**24,676**
Total U.S. truck	**12,850**	**14,823**	**42,631**	**560,928**	**525,623**
Total Can. truck	**8,700**	**10,272**	**27,312**	**396,579**	**368,879**
CHRYSLER CORP.	**30,950**	**39,872**	**106,260**	**1,477,402**	**1,642,060**
Escort	5,767	0	11,281	185,147	242,031
Mustang	2,509	0	4,337	81,974	129,066
Tempo	2,852	3,016	8,577	110,761	125,151
Tempo (Can.)	3,336	3,142	6,478	103,569	109,964
Taurus	7,927	6,987	18,664	312,934	329,852
Thunderbird	0	1,950	4,535	71,433	107,366
Crown Victoria (Can.)	2,214	0	3,832	85,888	120,503
Aerostar (trk.)	4,020	4,000	8,020	167,719	197,999
Bronco (trk.)	694	691	2,058	19,953	45,878
Explorer/Bronco II (trk.)	6,634	6,300	20,339	283,320	210,231
Navajo (trk.)	329	298	996	11,978	8,687
Econoline (trk.)	0	1,931	3,634	135,842	166,589
Heavies (trk.)	1,040	1,040	3,107	32,337	48,649
Light trucks (trk.)	10,750	10,224	32,372	339,110	425,889
Light trucks (Can. trk.)	2,950	2,861	8,754	98,378	°131,388
Ranger (trk.)	6,835	1,427	12,627	265,904	280,950
Total Ford Div.	**57,857**	**43,867**	**149,611**	**2,308,248**	**2,680,193**
Topaz	1,548	1,389	4,653	48,633	46,729
Topaz (Can.)	1,402	1,352	2,754	35,280	40,623
Cougar	0	1,290	3,025	52,144	73,373
Sable	3,047	2,897	7,434	108,634	101,334
Grand Marquis (Can.)	2,586	0	5,749	100,098	114,059
Total Mercury	**8,583**	**6,928**	**23,615**	**344,789**	**376,118**
Continental	983	991	2,962	51,660	58,620
Mark VII	206	197	598	9,177	18,023
Town Car	2,971	2,972	8,900	124,576	145,806
Total Lincoln	**4,160**	**4,160**	**12,460**	**185,413**	**222,449**
Total L-M Div.	**12,743**	**11,088**	**36,075**	**530,202**	**598,567**
Total U.S. car	**27,810**	**21,589**	**74,986**	**1,157,874**	**1,377,351**
Total Can. car	**9,538**	**4,494**	**18,813**	**324,835**	**385,149**
Total U.S. truck	**30,302**	**25,911**	**83,153**	**1,256,163**	**1,384,872**
Total Can. truck	**2,950**	**2,861**	**8,754**	**98,378**	**131,388**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**70,600**	**54,955**	**185,686**	**2,836,450**	**3,278,760**
Skylark	2,510	2,437	7,114	61,134	94,289
Century	1,470	1,474	4,400	96,786	63,771
Regal (Can.)	2,600	2,667	7,937	125,937	102,512
Riviera	453	362	1,233	10,233	21,312
Park Avenue/Electra	1,649	1,684	4,973	92,544	62,621
LeSabre	3,500	3,359	10,222	108,771	154,415
Roadmaster Sedan+	1,288	1,277	3,832	45,453	4,092
Roadmaster Wagon†	0	0	0	14,241	0
Reatta	0	0	0	1,210	5,590
Total Buick	**13,470**	**13,260**	**39,711**	**556,309**	**508,602**
Eldorado	934	749	2,530	16,043	22,038
Seville	1,013	794	2,736	26,616	35,313
Brougham	552	535	1,552	21,973	29,637
DeVille	3,969	3,965	11,841	157,977	161,970
Allante	0	62	121	2,860	3,498
Total Cadillac	**6,468**	**6,105**	**18,780**	**225,468**	**252,456**
Cavalier	5,240	6,148	16,331	249,758	360,799
Camaro	0	0	0	51,312	70,939
Celebrity (Can.)	0	0	0	0	20,319
Corsica-Beretta	4,880	5,744	16,264	238,086	269,018
Lumina (Can.)	6,500	6,593	19,682	248,527	216,996
Caprice	920	916	2,832	122,746	199,717
Corvette	480	481	1,433	20,795	22,004
Astro (trk.)	3,286	2,810	9,390	107,249	125,162
Blazer (trk.)	288	347	989	7,516	15,352
Lumina APV (trk.)	1,564	1,417	4,499	52,038	77,220
Mediums (trk.)	107	131	379	2,844	8,302
P-Model (trk.)	0	485	948	18,508	20,851
Pickups (trk.)	3,476	6,675	16,453	291,114	394,782
Pickups (Can. trk.)	4,000	4,071	12,008	149,644	167,483
S10 (trk.)	2,603	2,150	9,411	251,790	242,886
S10 Blazer (trk.)	2,547	3,970	10,003	62,394	73,307
Sportsvan (trk.)	1,375	1,430	3,996	45,889	54,837
Sportsvan (Can. trk.)	1,300	1,319	4,140	56,727	46,062
Suburban (trk.)	604	736	1,668	24,406	61,885
Total Chevrolet	**39,170**	**45,423**	**130,446**	**2,001,344**	**2,447,811**
Achieva/Calais	1,735	1,802	4,873	40,574	100,087
Cutlass Ciera	3,579	3,568	10,686	109,692	65,339
Cutlass Ciera (Can.)	0	0	0	41,161	75,556
Cutlass Supreme	0	2,370	4,770	104,232	93,786
Toronado	267	207	713	5,876	14,772
Eight Eight	2,541	2,488	7,502	91,444	99,139
Custom Cruiser Wag.††	0	0	0	7,780	3,436
Ninety Eight	1,255	1,235	3,713	74,515	42,346
Silhouette (trk.)	500	450	1,435	20,857	28,435
Bravada (trk.)	256	419	1,021	14,380	1,335
Total Oldsmobile	**10,133**	**12,539**	**34,713**	**510,511**	**524,231**
Sunbird	2,550	3,004	7,960	117,207	167,404
Grand Am	5,075	4,583	14,456	146,377	204,813
Firebird	0	0	0	19,988	40,361
Grand Prix	0	3,338	6,720	112,743	112,875
Pontiac 6000	0	0	0	19,603	51,522
Bonneville	2,645	2,620	7,902	86,157	72,179
Trans Sport (trk.)	938	841	2,676	32,416	41,992
Total Pontiac	**11,208**	**14,386**	**39,714**	**534,491**	**691,146**
Yukon/Jimmy (trk.)	100	102	295	2,337	4,685
Mediums (trk.)	493	578	1,559	6,443	6,451
P-Model (trk.)	0	44	95	2,144	2,769
Pickups (trk.)	976	2,534	6,151	117,769	142,861
Pickups (Can. trk.)	1,350	1,398	4,202	55,051	61,483
Syclone/Sonoma (trk.)	886	355	2,656	57,816	53,380
Typhoon/S15 Jimmy (trk.)	654	1,110	2,719	21,377	22,979
Safari (trk.)	1,154	993	3,183	41,421	43,562
Suburban (trk.)	376	313	919	18,536	30,686
Vandura (trk.)	450	498	1,342	19,221	20,476
Vandura (Can. trk.)	700	732	2,300	23,978	18,008
Total GMC	**7,139**	**8,657**	**25,421**	**366,093**	**407,340**
Total Saturn+	**2,403**	**2,403**	**7,209**	**96,958**	**4,245**
Total U.S. car	**50,908**	**57,695**	**163,938**	**2,371,684**	**2,953,417**
Total Can. car	**9,100**	**9,260**	**27,619**	**415,625**	**415,383**
Total U.S. truck	**22,833**	**28,388**	**81,787**	**1,218,465**	**1,473,995**
Total Can. truck	**7,358**	**7,520**	**22,650**	**285,400**	**293,036**
GENERAL MOTORS	**89,991**	**102,773**	**295,994**	**4,291,174**	**4,835,831**
Can. car	2,400	2,550	7,252	109,393	53,346
Can. trk.	1,450	1,475	4,396	54,376	17,392
CAMI*	**3,850**	**4,025**	**11,648**	**163,769**	**70,738**
DIAMOND-STAR+*	**3,422**	**3,298**	**9,915**	**150,330**	**151,052**
Civic	2,775	2,374	7,411	84,337	100,651
Civic (Can.)	2,160	2,214	6,219	101,067	103,794
Accord	9,400	7,740	24,780	364,711	332,666
Total U.S. car	**12,175**	**10,114**	**32,191**	**449,048**	**433,317**
Total Can. car	**2,160**	**2,214**	**6,219**	**101,067**	**103,794**
HONDA	**14,335**	**12,328**	**38,410**	**550,115**	**537,111**
HYUNDAI Sonata (Can.)	**1,242**	**950**	**3,929**	**29,586**	**26,290**
MAZDA*	**3,587**	**3,874**	**12,149**	**165,506**	**181,108**
U.S. trk.	1,650	1,650	4,950	64,027	72,261
Can. trk.	165	165	496	6,719	8,524
NAVISTAR+	**1,815**	**1,815**	**5,446**	**70,746**	**80,785**
Sentra	2,930	2,867	8,963	131,348	97,568
Pickup (trk.)	2,842	2,785	8,691	131,425	139,404
NISSAN	**5,772**	**5,652**	**17,654**	**262,773**	**236,972**
Geo Prizm	1,950	2,346	6,249	89,759	101,723
Toyota Corolla	2,500	2,999	8,000	104,497	102,790
Toyota Hilux (trk.)	225	274	746	2,417	0
NUMMI	**4,675**	**5,619**	**14,995**	**196,673**	**204,513**
Legacy	1,120	1,348	3,732	56,785	35,115
Pickup (trk.)	485	571	1,579	25,949	0
Rodeo (trk.)	1,027	1,146	3,238	32,272	0
Total U.S. car	**1,120**	**1,348**	**3,732**	**56,785**	**35,115**
Total U.S. trk.	**1,512**	**1,717**	**4,817**	**58,221**	**37,235**
SUBARU-ISUZU	**2,632**	**3,065**	**8,549**	**115,006**	**72,350**
Camry	4,590	5,483	14,527	186,775	217,463
Corolla (Can.)	1,500	1,535	4,559	66,698	61,071
TOYOTA	**6,090**	**7,018**	**19,086**	**253,473**	**278,534**
VOLVO 740, 940 (Can.)	**150**	**150**	**450**	**7,681**	**8,189**
AM GENERAL (trk.)	**375**	**375**	**1,125**	**19,948**	**22,148**
MISCELLANEOUS (trk.)**	**2,400**	**2,500**	**7,469**	**131,429**	**147,000**
Total U.S. car	**126,392**	**126,210**	**378,215**	**5,364,586**	**6,073,786**
Total Canada car	**25,098**	**21,153**	**69,572**	**1,072,924**	**1,077,896**
Total U.S.-Canada Car	**148,482**	**147,463**	**439,787**	**6,437,513**	**7,151,684**
Total U.S. truck	**74,789**	**78,423**	**235,399**	**3,442,988**	**3,803,130**
Total Canada truck	**20,815**	**22,293**	**63,686**	**841,452**	**819,219**
Total U.S.-Canada truck	**95,604**	**100,716**	**299,086**	**4,284,450**	**4,622,349**
TOTAL U.S.	**190,181**	**204,733**	**605,515**	**8,807,587**	**9,876,916**
TOTAL CANADA	**45,705**	**43,446**	**133,180**	**1,914,376**	**1,897,117**
TOTAL U.S.-CANADA CAR & TRUCK	**241,886**	**248,179**	**738,695**	**10,721,963**	**11,774,033**

«Estimate †1990 totals reflect LeSabre (rwd) ††1990 totals reflect Olds. 88 (rwd)
*CAMI includes Geo Metro and Suzuki Swift cars and Geo Tracker and Suzuki Sidekick trucks; Diamond-Star includes Eagle Summit and Talon, Mitsubishi Eclipse and Mirage and Plymouth Laser; Mazda includes MX-6, 626 and Ford Probe.
**Estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz. May contain error of one or two units due to rounding.

'91 build is lowest since '82

ANNE E. WRIGHT
Chief Statistician

Car and truck production in the United States and Canada for the 1991 calendar year is estimated at 10,721,963, down 8.94 percent from the 1990 total and the lowest since 1982 when 8,146,038 vehicles were produced.

Car production in the United States is down an estimated 11.7 percent from 1990, making it the lowest year since 1982.

In Canada, 1991 car production is estimated at 1,072,924, down 0.5 percent from last year.

U.S. truck producers estimated their 1991 output at 3,442,998, down 9.5 percent from 1990 and the lowest calendar-year total since 1984.

Canadian truck producers' estimated 1991 build is 841,452, up 2.7 percent over 1990.

The Big 3 have extended the holiday vacation at 25 U.S. and Canadian plants. Twenty-two plants will be idled due to slow sales.

Ford Motor Co. will idle 14 plants the week of Jan. 6 due to slow sales. They are the Lorain, Ohio; Wayne, Mich.; Dearborn, Mich.; Oakville, Ontario; St. Thomas, Ontario; and Kansas City, Mo., car plants and the Lorain, Ohio; Edison, N.J.; St. Paul, Minn.; St. Louis; Michigan Truck; Norfolk, Va.; St. Thomas, Ontario; and Kentucky Truck truck plants.

Ford will also idle the Wixom, Mich., car facility due to a materials shortage caused by an explosion at TRW's Romeo, Mich., air-bag plant.

General Motors will idle the Oshawa, Ontario (No. 1); Oshawa, Ontario (No. 2), and Wentzville, Mo., car plants and the Shreveport, La.; Detroit, and Pontiac, Mich. (West), truck plants the week of Jan. 6 due to high inventories.

The Fort Wayne, Ind., truck plant will be idle the weeks of Jan. 6 and Jan. 13.

The Allante line at the Detroit-Hamtramck, Mich., car facility will be idle the entire month of January for model changeover. Production of 1993 models will begin in February.

GM's Lake Orion, Mich., car plant and the Pontiac, Mich. (East), truck plant will be down until Jan. 27 for plant maintenance.

Chrysler Corp.'s Sterling Heights, Mich., facility will be closed the first two weeks of January due to slow sales. Chrysler will idle additional plants following the holidays but will not name them until Jan. 2.

Honda of America Manufacturing Inc. scheduled overtime last Saturday at the Marysville, Ohio, and East Liberty, Ohio, car facilities.

Last week, U.S. and Canadian car producers' estimated production was 146,482, down 0.7 percent from the prior week and up 36.6 percent from the year-ago week.